Dear Friends,

As we wind down an exciting 2017—Oak Park Festival Theatre's most successful year ever—I find myself reflecting on the unique role that theater holds in our culture and in our community.

Great theater engages us through timeless texts that reverberate with the pulse of today's society. Vibrant characters like the swashbuckling pirates of The Fair Maid of the West entertain. Classic plays, such as this season's Macbeth, educate us on the complexities of the human condition, even 400 years after they were written. Theater such as the provocative and powerful The Amish Project inspires us to create the more humane world of which Maurois writes.

As an Oak Park resident for almost four decades, I have long admired and enjoyed the fact that we have such an artistic treasure – right here in our midst. Since its first production of A Midsummer Night's Dream on the back of a flat-bed truck in 1975, Oak Park Festival Theatre has engaged, entertained, educated, and inspired our community with passion and talent. We are delighted to now present this exciting world premiere of A Dickens Carol—an all-new holiday tradition that re-imagines the story of Scrooge from Dickens' point of view and real-life events.

In 2018, our 43rd season promises to continue this rich legacy of professional theater. More than eighty years after it premiered on Broadway, our first play of the season, the Pulitzer-winning and crowd-pleasing You Can't Take It with You, has lost none of its comedic punch. Next summer we are also delighted to bring to our community The African Company Presents Richard III, a contemporary play based on the experiences of the actual African Grove Theatre Troupe in New York City forty years before the Civil War – a play that challenges us to ask: To whom does great literature belong? We hope that you will join us for these marvelous outdoor theatrical experiences in Oak Park's beautiful Austin Gardens.

In this season of gratitude, Oak Park Festival Theatre also wishes to thank our loyal audience, as well as those who support us with their generous donations. Without you, we simply would not exist. We look forward to your continued engagement with us in the future – together helping to create that more humane world that we all seek.

Respectfully,
Anne Rooney
President, Board of Directors
FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Happy Holidays!

Welcome to Oak Park Festival Theatre’s End of Season 43.

I am proud to present to you our plans for our 44th Season. A season looking at Inclusion and Exclusion. Our first show in the summer of 2018 will be Kaufman and Hart’s classic comedy, the Pulitzer Prize winning, You Can’t Take It With You. For our second show of the 2018 season we are elated to present The African Company presents Richard III. This is a marvelous piece of African American History, American History and Theatrical History, and compelling drama by Carlyle Brown. Based on true events. I hope you’ll make plans to spend time with us next summer.

I am proud to present to you our plans for our 44th Season. A season looking at Inclusion and Exclusion. For our first show in the summer of 2018, we are elated to present The African Company presents Richard III. This is a marvelous piece of African American History, American History and Theatrical History, and compelling drama by Carlyle Brown. Based on true events. Our second show of the 2018 season will be Kaufman and Hart’s classic comedy, the Pulitzer Prize winning, You Can’t Take It With You. I hope you’ll make plans to spend time with us next summer.

Thanks so much to the work of our Board of Directors, Artistic Associates, our staff, our interns, volunteers, the Park District of Oak Park, the Village of Oak Park, our sponsors, and to our wonderful Managing Director, Jhenai Mootz.

Equally important is your support. Your donations, your telling your friends, your buying tickets and your BEING HERE TONIGHT, and coming back again, show after show, season after season, year after glorious year is how we are able to present to you these timeless texts in the fresh air of beautiful Austin Gardens!

Jack Hickey
Artistic Director

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The many stories and specifics of Dickens life detailed here are all true. His marriage troubles, his book troubles, his dalliances with other women. His history in the blacking factory and apprenticeship in the law firm are also true as is the time his family spent in Marshalsea Debtors Prison.

The only narrative change in this play is the timing of the South Eastern Railway crash which killed 10 passengers and nearly killed Dickens (or “Bozes” as some called him in his youth).

That crash has been reimagined to a time just before the creation of *A Christmas Carol*. Reimagined as the very jolt than caused the inspiration for his holiday classic and changed the course of Dickens' fortunes forever.

Ned Crowley
In any discussion wherein the greatest writers in the history of the English language are nominated, two names invariably jump to the top of every list: William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens. Dickens himself acknowledged Shakespeare as his greatest literary influence and the works of Charles Dickens are liberally sprinkled with Shakespearean references. (One catalogue of Shakespeare's quotes and allusions in Dickens' work runs over 120 pages).

Dr. Paul Schlicke of Aberdeen University wrote a 2004 essay on Dickens' early immersion in Shakespeare's works and it becomes clear that there was perhaps no greater admirer of the Bard than the young Charles Dickens:

“Dickens' engagement with Shakespeare was lifelong. On the day after his eighteenth birthday, the earliest date he could gain admission to the library of the British Museum, among the books [Dickens] checked out were two multi-volume editions of Shakespeare... On the occasion of the first anniversary of *The Pickwick Papers*, his publishers Chapman and Hall presented [Dickens] with a set of Shakespeare... And on the eve of his departure for America in 1842, his friend and biographer John Forster gave him a one-volume edition which, Dickens reported, "I constantly carry in my great-coat pocket."

But Dickens' admiration of Shakespeare went far beyond using him as a literary touchstone. Charles Dickens was an active member of the Shakespeare Club, meeting weekly for readings, papers and discussions. He was involved with the London Shakespeare Committee, which purchased and preserved Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-Upon-Avon. Dickens numbered many theatre professionals among his closest friends, including the great Shakespearean actor William Charles Macready, and regularly attended (and often wrote reviews of) performances of Shakespeare's plays throughout his life. Dickens even appeared as Justice Shallow in a series of performances of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* to raise money for the bankrupt playwright and actor John Sheridan Knowles.

Of Shakespeare's cameos in Dickens' own work, Dr. Schlicke provides a short sampling:

"*Othello* is the play chosen for amateur theatricals by Mrs. Joseph Porter in *Sketches by Boz*; *Romeo* is the character in which Nicholas Nickleby achieves his finest hour with Vincent Crummles and his strolling players; and the most extended account of a Shakespearean performance appears in *Great Expectations*, when Pip and Herbert go to see Mr. Wopsle undertake the role of Hamlet."

As to how Shakespeare influenced him directly, Dickens refers to himself in an early essay, *The Pantomime of Life*, as a follower of Shakespeare, "...tracking out his footsteps at the scarcely-worth-mentioning little distance of a few millions of leagues behind."
What the Dickens?: Little Known Facts About His Life

- Dickens’ father John was renowned as a jovial opportunist who often begged Charles’ friends for money.

- In 1822, soon after moving to London, John Dickens was arrested for an outstanding debt to a baker and his entire family (except for Charles) was sent to Marshalsea debtors prison until he could pay off the debt.

- At age 10, Dickens worked a 12-hour day at Warren boot-blackening factory for 6 shillings a week (about 6 cents in today’s money) to help out his family.

- Dickens had 4 children and one on the way when he wrote Christmas Carol. Kate, his youngest daughter, was nicknamed “Lucifer Box” for her fiery temper.

- As a young man, Dickens worked as a law clerk. The firm was Ellis & Blackmore, however, not Winterfezz & Marley. He eventually left to become a journalist.

- As a journalist, he became interested in social reform. Writing stories about common working men and skepticisms of the upper class.

- Dickens’ first novel, a collection of newspaper installments called *The Pickwick Papers* was a huge success. Later efforts like *Barnaby Rudge* and *Curiosity Shop* paled in comparison. *American Notes* was considered frivolous and dull.

- Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in a “feverish pitch” over only 6 weeks. He said he wrote “like a man possessed” and wept and laughed as he did.

- In Dickens’ London, the air was always yellow due to the constant fog and the 24/7 oil streetlamp glow.

- The Staplehurst train crash killed 10 passengers as 7 train cars went off the rails and into the Kent River.

- After the Staplehurst crash Dickens avoided all rail travel and campaigned vigorously for childrens’ rights.

- Dickens’ wife Catherine was the daughter of George Hogarth, the editor of London’s legendary Evening Chronicle.

- As Dickens’ books became illegally copied and sold, he was the first to petition for copyright laws against piracy.

- Dickens’ childhood nickname was “Bozes”

- Rumors of Dickens’ affairs were numerous, including one with 19-year-old Eleanor Pickens, daughter of a family friend.

- The Staplehurst crash that nearly killed Dickens happened in June 1865, not Christmas 1842. It was caused because a flag man was placed at a distance too short for the train to stop.

- Dickens died 5 years to the day after the crash.

- Victorian prison uniforms were stamped with “the broad arrow” to denote the prisoner was crown property.
What the Dickens? Little Known Facts About His Life Cont.

- Towards the end of his life, Dickens would read and perform *A Christmas Carol* to sold out audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. First for charity and later for profit.

- Dickens became very close to his editor, John Forester, who believed Dickens to be a genius and went out of his way to serve him around the clock.

- In Dickens’ time, December 25th was associated with Winter’s Solstice—the longest night of the year—when the spiritual world and the physical world were considered particularly permeable and spirits would return to Earth for unfinished business.

A Note from the Director

Why?

This story- *A Christmas Carol* - has been performed in so many different ways, from the early stage versions, the films, the TV movies and even a number of animated features (from Muppets to Magoo), the question, really is: Why do it? Why return again and again to this story?

Look at the character of Scrooge. He is an old man, set in his ways, and very likely close to death. Why bother attempting to reform him? What’s the point? His life is almost over so… why should Marley and the other spirits even trouble themselves to redeem him? Wouldn’t it be better to simply wait for his inevitable passing, bury him in the ground, forget his name and move on? Why make the effort in the first place?

The answer, of course, is that it is never too late for redemption. No one- even bitter, stubborn, avaricious old men- is beyond saving. If any one single character embodies the idea that great good that can come from having a late-in-life change of heart, it is Ebenezer Scrooge. When he wakes up on Christmas morning and realizes that he has been given a second chance, his first impulse is to reach out to everyone in his life - his neglected family, his abused clerk Bob Cratchit, his fellow businessmen - and try to make amends for all of his years of self-obsession. And his good deeds shine even more brightly having come from such an unlikely source.

The effects of his reformation are transcendent. His family rushes to embrace him in a burst of familial joy and celebration. Those seeking a charitable donation from him are stunned by his sudden and overwhelming generosity. And the Cratchits are the greatest beneficiaries of all, suddenly able to care for their doomed son and watch him grow healthy and strong, a Christmas miracle if there ever was one.

Today, the message of *A Christmas Carol* could not be more timely. If there was ever an era wherein we need to be reminded that compassion, generosity of spirit, mercy, charity and benevolence should - and can - be our primary focus on this Earth, it is right now. Dark times call for more light, not more darkness. The story of *A Dickens Carol*, like the original story upon which it is based, is like the good deed which, according to Mr. Shakespeare, shines so brightly in this weary world.

Kevin Theis
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
# THE CAST (in alphabetical order)

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Erica Bittner†</td>
<td>Ghost of Christmas Past/Mrs. Ratchford/Mrs. Dilbert/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Evan Coles</td>
<td>Caroler Boy/Blackie/Edward/Walter</td>
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<td>Matt Gall†</td>
<td>Ratchford/Charles/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Margaret Garofalo</td>
<td>Hall/Mrs. Winterfezz/Mrs. Oliver/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Frederick Harris</td>
<td>Conductor/Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Robert Koon</td>
<td>Ghost of Shakespeare/Sgt. Joe/John/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Mark Lancaster†</td>
<td>Ghost of Christmas Present/Winterfezz/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Delilah Lane</td>
<td>Little Kate/Little Belle/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Jhenai Mootz†</td>
<td>Catherine Dickens</td>
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<td>Laura Resinger</td>
<td>Georgy/Musician/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Matty Robinson†</td>
<td>Chapman/Foreman/Rescuer/Will/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Gwendolyn Theis</td>
<td>Charlie/Peter/Ensemble</td>
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<td>Kevin Theis†</td>
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<td>Magdelena Keberlein</td>
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<td>Understudies never substitute for listed performers unless</td>
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<td>announced at the time of the performance</td>
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*Member of Actors’ Equity Association,  
The Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers  
†Oak Park Festival Theatre Company Member

# SETTING

London 1842, Christmas Eve
PRODUCTION STAFF

Playwright ......................................................................................................................... Ned Crowley
Director .............................................................................................................................. Kevin Theis*†
Stage Manager .................................................................................................................... Leigh Anne Barrett**†
Assistant Stage Manager .................................................................................................... Becca Moran
Choreographer .................................................................................................................. Clayton Cross
Production Manager ......................................................................................................... Stephanie Hawkins
Assistant Production Manager ............................................................................................ Jennifer Aparicio
Technical Director ........................................................................................................... Brian Sprague
Lighting Design .................................................................................................................. Kevin T. Gawley
Set Design .......................................................................................................................... Ira Amyx, Merje Veski
Costume Design ................................................................................................................ Rachel Sypniewski
Props Design ....................................................................................................................... Belinda Bremner, Becca Moran and Margaret Garofalo
Dialect Coach ....................................................................................................................... Kathy Logelin
Original Music and Sound Design ..................................................................................... Christopher Kriz§
Dance Captain ...................................................................................................................... Erica Bittiner†
Movement Captain ............................................................................................................. Mark Lancaster†
Young Performer Supervisor .............................................................................................. Amanda Forman
Photographer ....................................................................................................................... Cole Simon

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†Oak Park Festival Theatre Company Member
§Member of United Scenic Artists

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A Dickens Carol
CAST PROFILES

Erica Bittner† (Female Prisoner/Mrs. Ratchford/Dilbert/Past/Ensemble/Dance Captain) Erica Bittner returns to OPFT where she is an Artistic Associate and has appeared in Pygmalion and Love’s Labours Lost. Favorite credits include: King Charles III (Cardinal Stage Company); Bad Jews (Theatre Wit); The Madness of Edgar Allen Poe (First Folio Theatre); A Christmas Carol (Drury Lane); Richard III: No Beast So Fierce (Oracle Theatre); and work with Piven Theatre, Music Theatre Works, Redmoon, One Year Chekhov, GreatWorks, Chicago Dramatists, Victory Gardens, and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. International: The Two Noble Kinsmen (RADA) and Momentary Opera (Redmoon). Television: Chicago Fire, American Greed. Erica holds a BFA from the Chicago College of Performing Arts and trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Represented by Gray Talent Group.

Evan Coles (Blackie/Walter Ratchford/Ensemble) Evan is excited to make his debut in the Oak Park Festival Theatre presentation of A Christmas Carol. Evan has been performing on stage since the age of three, starting programs as a toddler at Chicago’s Emerald City Theatre in a production of The Magic Tree House. He continued his training in Chicago for the past six years at Infinity Arts Academy (IAA). While at IAA he has participated in medleys from various Broadway productions such as Les Misérables, Beauty and the Beast, and The Lion King while also starring and working behind the scenes on several independently produced films.

Matt Gall † (Assistant Director/Ratchford) is an Artistic Associate at OPFT, appearing in Macbeth, Hamlet, and The Taming of the Shrew. Past Chicago productions include New Country (Den Theatre.), Design for Living (Pride Films & Plays), Misalliance, Major Barbara, Pygmalion, Saint Joan (ShawChicago), Dial “M” for Murder (Metropolis), Enchanted April (Citadel), Wrong Mountain (Rare Terra), The Pillowman (Spartan), and The Blue Room (Stage 773). Regionally, Matt appeared recently in Ah, Wilderness! (A Noise Within, Los Angeles) and in the 2014 National Tour of Griffin Theatre’s Letters Home. Matt is a New Hampshire native and a graduate of Ithaca College.

Margaret Garofalo (Mrs. Winterfezz/Hall/Mrs. Oliver/Vendor 1/Ensemble) This is Margaret’s first appearance with OPFT. She holds a BFA in Dramatic Writing from SUNY Purchase and an MA in Classical Theatre from Kingston University, London. Margaret has performed professionally in London, Italy, Scotland, and the USA. Her Chicago area credits include Metropolis’s Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (Horatio), JPAC’s Nevermore (Muddy) and Citadel Theatre’s A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum (Gymnasia). Some of her New England credits include The Pirates of Penzance (Director), Stowe Theatre Guild, School for Lies (Dubois) Waterbury Festival Players, Oliver! (Widow Corney) Lyric Theatre Company, Hamlet (Rosencrantz) Champlain Theatre, Sweeney Todd (Mrs Lovett) Stowe Theatre Guild, and Secret Garden (Martha) STG.
**CAST PROFILES cont.**

**Frederick Harris (Conductor/Future/Ensemble)**
Frederick Harris is happy to be making his OPFT debut! Frederick’s most recent productions include Audry II in *Little Shop of Horrors* (William Street Repertory Theatre), Booker T. Washington in *Ragtime* (Griffith Theatre), the title role in *The Wiz* (Kokandy Productions — winner of The Black Theatre Alliance Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical), Piano Player in *Direct From Deathrow The Scottsboro Boys* (Raven Theatre)—winner of the Jeff Award for Best Ensemble, Sis Hubert in *Nunsense* (Beverly Arts Center), and Ronald in *Hands on a Hard Body* (William Street Repertory Theatre). Frederick has received his M.F.A. from The Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. Frederick is thankful to God and the Spirit of his Ancestors for continuing to give love and light this life. T.E.

**Magdalena Keberlein (Understudy Little Kate/Little Belle/Ensemble)**
Magdalena is 8 years old. This is Magdalena’s debut theatre performance. Magdalena enjoys many activities like gymnastics, softball, swimming, dancing, singing, and piano. She is in 3rd grade at Willard Elementary. She is very excited to be a part of this cast.

**Robert Koon (Shakespeare/Sergeant Joe/Ensemble)**
Robert is pleased to be working with OPFT once again, after appearing in 2016’s *The Taming of the Shrew*. Recent appearances include *Seminar* for Spartan Theatre Company, *The Woman in Black* for WildClaw Theatre Company, *Chagrin Falls* for The Agency Theatre Collective (Jeff nomination), and *Human Terrain* for Broken Nose Theatre. He is a Resident Playwright Alumnus at Chicago Dramatists, where his plays *Homecoming 1972* and *St. Colm’s Inch* were produced; and he is a former Playwright Resident at the William Inge Center for the Arts. Robert is an Associate Artist with 16th Street Theatre and Broken Nose Theatre, and he is a member of the Dramatists Guild.

**Mark Lancaster† (Father Christmas/Winterfezz/Ghost of Christmas Present/Movement Captain)**
Mark Lancaster moved to Chicago in 2007 from Dallas, TX. He completed an MFA in Acting from The Theatre School at DePaul University in 2012, and has since been working as an actor, burlesque emcee/performer, creature effects model, and is currently pursuing a path up the ranks of the Society of American Fight Directors. Mark is an Artistic Associate with OPFT where his credits include the 2017 productions of *Macbeth* and *The Fair Maid of the West*. This is his third time performing in a version of *A Christmas Carol*, but only the first time doing so in a language other than Klingon.

**Delilah Lane (Little Kate/Little Belle/Ensemble)**
Delilah Lane is a fourth grader at the British International School of Chicago, South Loop. Her theater credits include Neverbird Project’s *Pinocchio* at Chicago Children’s Theater and shows with the Lookingglass Theater Youth Ensemble. She enjoys outdoor summer performances as the youngest member of Chicago Beatbox Limited with her father, Yuri Lane.
Delilah is very excited to be a part of the Oak Park Festival Theater production of *A Dickens Carol*.

**Jhenai Mootz† (Kate/Catherine)** is honored to have been working with OPFT since 2006 as an actor where she has been seen as Lady Macduff/Hecate in *Macbeth*, Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Osric in *Hamlet*, Olivia in *Twelfth Night*, Lady Anne in *Richard III*, Raina in *Arms and the Man*, Chrissie in *Dancing at Lughnasa*, Margaret in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Christine in *Murder by the Book* and Madge in *Picnic*. Other credits around town: *Saint Joan*, *Man & Superman*, *Pygmalion*, *The Widowers’ Houses*, *The Millionairess*, *Mrs. Warren’s Profession*, *Arms and the Man* (ShawChicago), *Sparky*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Moonstone* (Lifeline Theatre), *The Mystery of Edgar Allen Poe* (First Folio Shakespeare Company), *The Women* and *The Philadelphia Story* (Circle Theatre). Jhenai joined the staff in 2016 as OPFT’s Managing Director and holds a B.F.A. from the University of Utah’s Actor Training Program. Also a visual artist, Jhenai’s artwork can currently be found in the lobby of the Lifeline Theater & Andersonville Galleria, O’Hare Airport, Northwestern hospital gift shops and on her website at JhenaiMootz.com.

**Matty Robinson† (Chapman/Forman/Vendor 2/Rescue Worker/Ensemble)** As an actor, he appeared in OPFT’s production of *The Taming of the Shrew* as Grumio, and worked on *The Fair Maid of the West* and *To Kill A Mockingbird*. An OPFT Artistic Associate, Matty also was OPFT’s Intern Coordinator in 2017. Matty is a proud Illinois State University alumni holding a Bachelor of Science degree in theatre. You can find him Friday nights during Pimprov as Prince Midas, doing shows around Chicago with The Moonsharks, or performing stand-up around the city.

Bumppo, ATC, Strawdog, Cor Theatre and Cock and Bull. Laura is a graduate of the MFA program at DePaul University.

**Laura Resinger (Georgy/Musician/Ensemble)** is excited to be working with OPFT for the first time! With an enthusiasm for physical and devised theatre, Laura was recently seen in the immersive show *Cursed: an American Tragedy* at The Foxhole, and is a member of the Birch House Artist Residency. Other Chicago credits include work with Remy Bumppo, ATC, Strawdog, Cor Theatre and Cock and Bull. Laura is a graduate of the MFA program at DePaul University.

**Kevin Theis*† (Dickens)** Kevin’s association with Festival Theatre goes back to 1990, where he first appeared as Prince John in Tom Mula’s production of *Falstaff*. Since then, he has appeared in numerous productions as a performer- both indoors and out- and has...
staged seven shows for OPFT as a director. Favorite roles include Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*, George in *Of Mice and Men*, Edward in *Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me* (Jeff nomination), Frank Hardy in *Faith Healer*, the title role in *Richard III* and Salieri in *Amadeus*. As a director, he has worked on *Picnic*, *Robin Hood*, *Henry V*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Fair Maid of the West* (which he also adapted). In addition to his work at OPFT, Kevin has worked as a performer at the Goodman Theatre, Next, Theater Wit, Peninsula Players, Buffalo Theatre Ensemble and the Irish Theatre of Chicago (formerly Seanachai Theatre) where he was a member of the Jeff Award winning ensemble of 2014’s *The Seafarer*. He has directed at Seanachai, CT20 Ensemble, Lifeline Theatre, City Lit and greasy joan & co. and has been nominated for three Jeff Awards for his directing work. He has two published plays, adaptations of Thomas Heywood’s *The Fair Maid of the West* and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of the Four* (the latter in conjunction with Shanghai Low Theatricals) and two novels, *Confessions of a Transylvanian* with co-author Ron Fox and *Invading Nirvana: a Chicagoan in the City of Angels*. He has been seen on NBC’s *Chicago Fire* and *Chicago P.D.* and ABC’s *Betrayal*.

**Gus Zaruba** *(Understudy Caroler Boy/Blackie/Walter Ratchford/Ensemble)*

Gus Zaruba is excited to be working with OPFT for the very first time. Other Chicago credits include: *The Heavens Are Hung in Black* (Shattered Globe), and *The Adventures of BB & Pepe* (The Billy Goat Experiment Theatre Company). Gus is a student at Mitchell Elementary School where he has just entered the sixth grade.
Staff Profiles

Ira Amyx (Set Design) is an actor/designer based in Chicago. Previously, he has co-designed, with Merje Veski, *A Moon for the Misbegotten* and *The White Road* for The Irish Theater of Chicago, both Jeff nominated (Mid-Size Scenic Design, Equity). He has enjoyed time on stage with Steppenwolf Theater, The Irish Theater of Chicago, Strawdog Theater Company and many others. He has been seen on TV and movie theaters in *Shameless, Empire, Chicago PD, Sirens, Written Off, Public Housing Unit* and a myriad of independent content. He has been nominated for 3 Equity Joseph Jefferson acting awards, winning for best ensemble, *The Seafarer* (ITC). He also works in film/advertising as an art director and scenic designer, he is Co-Owner of Hero Solutions, fabricating for film and TV for the past 10 years. He is represented by Gray Talent Group.

Jennifer Aparicio (Assistant Production Manager) has been working in the Chicago theater scene for the past few years as a production manager and stage manager. Previous production manager credits include work with Teatro Vista (*La Havana Madrid, Parachute Men, In the Time of the Butterflies, Where Did We Sit on the Bus?, My Manana Comes, Between You, Me, and the Lampshade, Tamer of Horses, A View from the Bridge*), Pegasus Players (*Blacula, The Youth Playwright's Festival*), Broken Nose (*At the Table, Bechdel Fest 2017*), and 16th Street Theater (*Book Club Play, Living Large in a Mini Kind of Way*). As a stage manager, credits include work with 16th Street Theater, Lifeline Theatre and Teatro Luna. She is also an Artistic Associate with Teatro Vista and 16th Street Theater.

Leigh Anne Barrett*† (Stage Manager) has been a producer, designer and stage manager in Chicago since landing here in 1989, most recently directing *The Invisible Scarlet O’Neil* for her artistic home, Babes With Blades Theatre Company. She’s delighted to return to OPFT after stage managing *Inherit the Wind, Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me, Hamlet*, and last summer’s *Macbeth*. Other Chicago credits include work with Shattered Globe, Next Theatre, Bailiwick Repertory, Strawdog, City Lit, Stage Left Theatre (where she’s a member emeritus), Artemisia, and Plasticene. Love and joy to you and yours - and please enjoy the show.

Clayton Cross (Choreographer) works nationwide as a choreographer, performer and master teacher. He is Choreographer in Residence in with Music Theater Works of Chicago where he most recently choreographed and performed as (Tulsa) in *Gypsy*, as well as choreographed and performed in *Mame*. With MTW Clayton choreographed Candide, Guys and Dolls, My Fair Lady, Die Fledermaus, and upcoming *Peter Pan* and as a performer in *The Fantastiks* (Mute) and *Damn Yankees* (Ensemble). With MTW Clayton has also assistant directed *Die Fledermaus, Candide* as well as *Let Me Entertain You: Jule Styne's Greatest Hits*. Other roles include Mercedes in *La Cage Aux Folles* (Marriott). He served for five years as artistic advisor, board member & choreographer for Renegade Dance Architects and is a master teacher for M.A. Dance. Clayton has twice been a consultant and contributed choreography for the Capital One Bowl’s All American Halftime Show. Throughout his 20 year career as a dancer he has worked with Robert Battle, Fernando Bujones, Sherry Zunker, Paul Taylor & Anne Reinking. Clayton’s television credits include *Every Dancer Has a Story*, a PBS special on the River North Chicago Dance Company (company member for 10 seasons). Clayton holds a double B.F.A. in Ballet and Modern Dance from Texas Christian University.

Ned Crowley (Playwright) has been part of the Chicago theater scene since the mid 80’s as a founding member of the comedy group White Noise where he co-wrote, co-directed, and co-starred in such infamous
productions as *The Book of Blanche*, *Stumpy’s Gang* and *Ad-nauseum*. He later went on to direct others on stage including Amy Poehler and Matt Walsh in *The Upright Citizens Brigade* and, more recently, writing and directing his own feature film; the award-winning dark-comedy *Middle Man* starring his friend and star of TV’s Parks and Recreation, Jim O’Heir. *Middle Man* recently took top honors at the Seattle International Film Fest and the Edmonton International Film Fest before going onto a national theatrical release. Today, *Middle Man* can be seen on iTunes, Amazon and Netflix. Ned is also the writer of the festival favorite and award-winning dramatic comedy *Parting Words*. A published children’s book author and illustrator, Ned currently serves as the U.S. Chief Creative Officer for mcgarrybowen advertising where he has written, produced, and overseen hundreds of commercial productions. Ned currently and happily lives in Oak Park with his wife and 3 daughters.

**Amanda Forman** (Young Performer Supervisor) is an actor, playwright, director, and educator. She received her BFA in Acting from Minnesota State University, Mankato. Since moving to Chicago Amanda has performed with several companies including Oak Park Festival Theatre, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, The Side Project Theatre, Clock Theatre, Pride Films and Plays, and Imagination Theater. Amanda’s plays have premiered throughout Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, and California.

**Kevin T. Gawley** (Lighting Design) is excited to be collaborating with Kevin Theis for the third time. Kevin’s design work at Lifeline Theatre was awarded the 2017 Non-Equity Jeff Award for *A Wrinkle in Time* for Lighting Design. His design of *Rabbit Hole* at Taylor University earned him the 2017 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival National Award in Lighting Design. In addition, Kevin’s lighting for Champaign Urbana Ballet’s *Nutcracker* was showcased on the cover of the 2017 Rosebrand Catalog. Over the span of his career, recognized critical acclaim includes seven additional Non-Equity Jeff Award nominations and two additional Jeff Awards for *The Island of Doctor Moreau* and *Jane Eyre*, and the After Dark Award for *Strong Poison*. His film credits include theatrical lighting design for *Were the World Mine*. Previous theatrical design and assistant design collaborations include Magik Theatre, The Goodman, Court, American Girl Productions, Lexington Children’s Theatre, Lifeline, Bailiwick, Organic, Porchlight, OperaModa, Blindfaith, Theatre on the Lake, Metropolis, Revels Chicago, Midwest Jewish, North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, Taylor University, and the National High School Institute at Northwestern University. Kevin is currently the Resident Scenic, Lighting and Projection Designer at the University of Louisville.

**Stephanie Hawkins** (Production Manager) is a freelance production manager and stage manager in the Chicagoland area, and she is delighted to continue her work with OPFT.

**Jack Hickey** (Artistic Director) This season marks Jack’s 15th year as Artistic Director. He was just seen here as King Mullisheg in *Fair Maid of the West* and King Duncan and the Porter in *Macbeth*. Last year Jack played Col. Pickering in *Pygmalion* and Gremio in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Other roles for OPFT include Heck Tate in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, King Claudius in *Hamlet*, Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*, Charlie in *Seascape* and was nominated for an Equity Jeff Award for playing Michael in *Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me*. Other roles include Henry Drummond in *Inherit the Wind*, Falstaff in *The History of King Henry the Fourth*, Fluellen in *Henry V*, Teddy in *Faith Healer*, Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*, Bottom in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. A Dickens Carol
Dream and the title role in Cyrano de Bergerac. Jack is also a company member of ShawChicago and played Falstaff in The Merry Wives of Windsor with The Shakespeare Project, Prospero in The Tempest with The Backroom Shakespeare Project and Claude in Heroes with the Illinois Theatre Center. TV credits: Chicago Med and Unsolved Mysteries.

Christopher Kriz§ (Sound Design) is an award-winning composer and sound designer based in Chicago. Winner of 3 Joseph Jefferson Awards for sound and music, with a total of 14 nominations. Kriz has been designing professionally for 25 years for companies including Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Court Theatre, Writers Theatre, Northlight, Victory Gardens and dozens of others. Some recent regional credits: Roz and Ray (Seattle Repertory Theatre); Sticky Traps (Kansas City Repertory Theatre); many summer season at Peninsula Players. Some recent and upcoming Chicago credits: Red Velvet (Chicago Shakespeare); Savior (Chicago Symphony Orchestra); The Magic Play, Carlyle (Goodman Theatre); Constellations, Monster (Steppenwolf); Roz and Ray, Hand To God, The House That Will Not Stand (Victory Gardens); Gem Of The Ocean (Court Theatre); Hang, Born Yesterday, Pygmalion, The Life Of Galileo (Remy Bumppo); Significant Other, Bright Half Life (About Face Theatre); Paradise Blue, Sunset Baby (Timeline Theatre); The Man-Beast, Captain Blood, Silent Sky, As You Like It (First Folio); Pilgrims, A Life Extra Ordinary, Good For Otto (The Gift Theatre); The Columnist (American Blues Theatre). Recently, Lifeline Theatre produced Kriz’s new musical, Soon I Will Be Invincible. Kriz is a proud member of United Scenic Artists 829. To hear more of his work, please visit www.christopherkriz.com.

Kathy Logelin (Dialect Coach) is thrilled to return to OPFT having previously coached Pygmalion and having acted in Betrayal and Arms and the Man. Recent Chicago credits include Moby Dick and Treasure Island at Lookingglass Theatre Co., Alias Grace with Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (where she is a company member), Beauty’s Daughter with American Blues Theatre, The Little Flower of East Orange and Jesus Hopped the A Train at Eclipse Theatre Co., and The Mutilated at A Red Orchid Theatre. Regional credits include Moby Dick at Arena Stage, The Alliance, and South Coast Repertory, Boeing-Boeing with Indiana Repertory Theatre, and R&J Damascus, One Man, Two Guvnors, Noises Off, A Christmas Carol, and Peter and the Starcatcher with TheatreSqured. International credits include Persuasion with Chamber Opera Chicago, U.K. tours 2013-2017, Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2015. Kathy holds a B.S. in Acting from Illinois State University.

Becca Moran† (Assistant Stage Manager) is thrilled to be working with this fantastic theatre for another production! She a lifelong audience member of Oak Park Festival Theatre and she was thrilled to join the Board in September 2017. She interned at the theatre in 2008 and spent a further four years as Assistant Stage Manager. Becca has a Masters of Public Health in Health Management and Policy from the University of Michigan; she is currently an Education Manager for Vizient, a healthcare performance improvement company.

Jhenai Mootz (Managing Director) See Cast Profile.

Rachel Sypieweski (Costume Designer) is thrilled to be back designing at OPFT. Her work was last seen for Pygmalion and Taming of the Shrew. Ms. Sypniewski has designed over 300 productions in the Chicago storefront and educational communities. Among her favorite Chicago credits are Yasmina’s Necklace (Goodman Theatre); The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui (Trap Door/Non-Equity Jeff Nominated–Best Costume Design), London Wall.
(Griffin/Non-Equity Jeff Nominated–Best Costume Design), Titanic: The Musical (Griffin/Non-equity Jeff Nominated–Best Costume Design); La Bete (Trap Door/ Jeff Award–Best Costume Design); Ragtime (Griffin); Hey! Dancin! the Musical (The Factory), Merchild (16th Street); Miss Holmes (Lifeline); Phadre (Trap Door). Rachel is the resident costume designer for Trap Door, Artistic Associate with 16th Street Theater and company member with the Factory. www.rachelsyp.com.

Brian Sprague (Technical Director) is a Chicago-based Freelance Theatre Artist. He graduated from Northern Illinois University with his MFA in Acting. He received his BA in Theatre from the University of Kentucky. He has performed and studied internationally at the Moscow Art Theatre and the Adana State Theatre in Turkey. Previous roles include: Scrooge in Christmas Carol, Anton and Otto Frank in Thinking Myself Out: The Story of Anne Frank, Casca in Julius Caesar, Antiochus/ Cleon in Pericles: Prince of Tyre, Antonio in The Tempest, The Duke in Measure for Measure, Henry in The Real Thing, Jacob in Awake and Sing!, Abbe de Coulmier in Marat/Sade, W.O. Gant in Look Homeward, Angel, Nils Krogsvar in A Doll’s House, Pytor Sorin in The Seagull, Andrew Napier in civilian (world premiere) and Rafe in Blur in the Rear View (world premiere). Technical Directing credits include: The Happiest Place on Earth (Sideshow Theatre), Give It All Back (Sideshow Theatre), Earthquakes in London (Steep Theatre), The Source (Route 66), Truth and Reconciliation (Sideshow Theatre), University of Kentucky’s Summer Children’s Theatre, and multiple shows for Actors Guild of Lexington.

Kevin Theis* (Director) See Cast Profile.

Merje Veski (Set Design) lives in Chicago and is working as a designer and decorator for film, television and theater. Most recently she was the designer for My Way Residential, The Wier and In a Little World of Our Own at Irish theatre of Chicago, where in 2012 she co-designed A Moon for the Misbegotten (Equity Jeff Nomination–Scenic Design) and 2015 The White Road (Equity Jeff Nomination–Scenic Design). Other theater credits include Quills (2001), People Annihilation (2005, directed by Tracy Letts) and Eva Peron (2007) for Trap Door Theater. Merje designed for Catherine Sullivan, media and video performances, Tis a Pity She’s a Fluxus Whore (2003), Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land (2005 at Whitney Museum) and The Chittendens (2005 TATE Modern, UK). Currently she has been working as an Art Director for the last two seasons of NBC’s Chicago Fire.

Actors’ Equity Association (AEA or Equity), founded in 1913, is the labor union that represents more than 48,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society.
SPECIAL THANKS

Sara Nichols
Belinda Bremner
Rosemary Foley and the staff of Madison Street Theater
William Bullion

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OAK PARK FESTIVAL ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES

Leigh Anne Barrett*  Aaron Christensen*  Erica Bittner
Belinda Bremner  John Crosthwaite  Luke Daigle
Tony Dobrowolski*  Matt Gall  Mark Lancaster
Mary Michell*  Mark Richard*  Matty Robinson
Kevin Theis*  Bryan Wakefield  Barbara Zahora*

*Member of Actor’s Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.

Warmest Wishes

from your friends at FOOTLIGHTS.COM
ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES ACTIVITIES

Leigh Anne Barrett*—See Profile in this program.

Aaron Christensen* recently appeared as Roughman in OPFT’s production of The Fair Maid of the West, as well as Jean Chastel in the world premiere of First Folio’s werewolf stage thriller The Man-Beast.

Erica Bittner—See Profile in this program.

Belinda Bremner most recently adapted, augmented, and appeared in The Thirty Nine Steps, Festival Theatre’s fifth annual Old Time Radio benefit. Her play Mrs. Coney will be the December Play & Pint presentation with two (2 PM and again at 6 PM) performances December 10 at Hamburger Mary’s. She is busy with and excited about Festival Theatre’s first ever “not available in stores anywhere” online auction of one-of-a-kind experiences.

John Crosthwaite is a Working Actor, Teacher, and Fight Choreographer in the San Francisco Bay Area. His latest project The Dark Hunger is currently screening Horror Film Festivals throughout the United States and Canada.

Luke Daigle is currently understudying Red Velvet at Chicago Shakespeare Theater which plays December through January 2018. Later this winter he will be working on a short film shot in Chicago.

Tony Dobrowolski* is preparing to participate in the Kirkland & Ellis Mock Trial for 2018. He was part of the 2017 event and looks forward to this one. In January, he will be in the cast of Coriolanus with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago, directed by Barbara Zahora.

Matt Gall—See Profile in this program

Mark Lancaster—See Profile in this program

Mary Michell* will be appearing in ShawChicago’s upcoming productions of Jeeves in Bloom and Hay Fever. As a member of the American Library Association’s Sibert committee, which annually chooses the best nonfiction books for children, she is spending a lot of time reading - and loving it!

Mark Richard* recently appeared in our Fall classic radio recreation of The 39 Steps.

Matty Robinson—See Profile in this program

Kevin Theis*—See Profile in this program

Bryan Wakefield—This winter, Bryan will be remounting the role of Scrooge in Tom Mula’s Jacob Marley’s Christmas Carol at Meiley-Swallow Hall in Naperville and in the summer of 2018, he will be directing Lauren Gunderson’s The Revolutionists for the Organic Theater at the Greenhouse Theater Center in Chicago.

Barbara Zahora* was recently seen as Judith Anderson in The Devil’s Disciple at ShawChicago, and she will also appear in Belinda Bremner’s Mrs. Coney in early December for OPFT! In 2018, Barbara will direct Coriolanus for the Shakespeare Project of Chicago in January and Hay Fever for ShawChicago in April. She’ll be making her directing debut at Silk Road Rising in May with Anu Bhatt’s new solo show, Hollow/Wave.
OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Oak Park Festival Theatre is partially funded by the Oak Park Area Arts Council, in partnership with the Villages of Oak Park, Forest Park and River Forest, the Illinois Arts Council agency, Richard Driehaus Foundation, The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation and The Saints: Volunteers for the Performing Arts

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Supporting roles (part time) are also being cast.

Show is open ended and has been running in Chicago since 1996.

Male or Female actors may apply. All ages will be considered. Candidates must be comfortable in front of a live audience and be able to handle the physical demands of daily performances. Improv experience is a plus.

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2:30 wine and desert reception | 3:30 performance

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OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE enthusiastically applauds and sends immense appreciation to THE SAINTS for their gracious and generous grant this year that allowed us, as long last, to purchase our own armory!

Due to the Saints big-hearted support, the quality weapons you see on stage this summer will help us continue to bring you furious and fabulous fights for years to come!
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Please consider joining our family of supporters today!

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<td>Marvin Marshall</td>
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<td>Mr. Polacek</td>
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<td>Patricia A. Skinner</td>
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<td>Ralph A and Donna Schuler</td>
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<td>Renee A. Plesher</td>
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<td>Ruth Krugly</td>
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<td>Sarah Shirk</td>
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<td>Tony Dobrowolski</td>
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<td>William Baker</td>
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<td>$250-$499</td>
<td>ALL’S WELL</td>
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<td>Colette M. Lueck and Marge Epstein</td>
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<td>Cynthia Gaffney</td>
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<td>David M and Sandra H Sokol</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Howland and Dennis A. Zavac</td>
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<td>Georgia K. and Allen L Parchem</td>
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